



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Riverside Receives the American Heart Association Platinum Fit-Friendly Award

Recognition a tribute to City's effort to encourage healthy lifestyles

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside received the American Heart Association's (AHA) 2015 Platinum Fit-Friendly Award for promoting a Health and Wellness culture among employees and implementing efforts to become a Fit-Friendly organization.

Mayor Rusty Bailey accepted the award on behalf of the City from Monique Stensrud, Heart Walk Director.

"I'm very proud of how the City of Riverside provides a healthy workplace for our employees, which sets a great example for the rest of our residents," Mayor Bailey said. "Eating healthy and getting more exercise are key ingredients of the effort, which are reflected in the many programs across our city that inspire residents to improve their heart health."

The Platinum level recognition is presented to companies and organizations that offer employees: physical activity support, increased healthy eating options at work, a wellness at work culture and implementation or access to programs that provide physical, nutrition and cultural activities. In addition, Platinum award recipients must demonstrate at least one behavior change, one cost savings outcome or a positive return on investment.

"This effort, which began in 2009, continues to pay dividends for the City of Riverside," said Brenda Diederichs, Director of Human Resources, the department that develops and coordinates the programs. "Our employees have enthusiastically embraced the march toward health."

Employees are actively engaged in a variety of competitive activities focused on getting healthier together, including an annual weight loss "Get Fit Challenge" program, the "Step Up Your Health" stairwell program that tracks stairwell usage by City employees, and the annual healthy eating holiday challenge, "Maintain Don't Gain."

"Employees are making over-all lifestyle changes that have provided measurable results including reduced absenteeism and a reduction in health care costs," Diederichs said.

As a Fit-Friendly organization, the City of Riverside will receive recognition on the AHA website. Also, Riverside will receive recognition throughout the Inland Empire at local AHA events and in AHA communications supporting recognition programs. Lastly, Riverside will have the right to use the AHA's Fit-Friendly companies Platinum seals on all internal and external communications to positively market the City as a Fit-Friendly employer.

The City of Riverside is proud to be amongst the top five (5) Fit-Friendly companies in the Inland Empire that received the Platinum award. For more information on Riverside's award winning Wellness program, visit: www.riversideca.gov/human/wellness



This workplace has been recognized
by the American Heart Association
for meeting criteria for employee wellness.